

## American Bald Eagle Takes Flight

ACCORDING to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, when the United States selected the American bald eagle as its national symbol in 1782, as many as 100,000 nesting bald eagles lived in the lower 48 states. Only 417 nesting pairs remained in 1963 because of habitat destruction,

hunters seeking feathers and trophies, and the use of the pesticide DDT.

Today, the number of bald

eagles has climbed back to 5,748, due to recovery efforts by the USFWS and other partners including the Army, which controls access to eagle habitat on installations to avoid interfering with nesting pairs. Because of this strong recovery, USFWS expects to remove the bald eagle from the threatened and endangered species list this year.

The Endangered Species Act defines an endangered species as one that is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its habitat.

The Army manages 12 million acres of public land, providing habitat to 174 endangered species. According to U.S. Army Environmental Center biologist Steve Sekscienski, 40 installations in the continental United States have bald eagles in residence at least part of the year.

Under the Sikes Act, environmental professionals at installations across the nation must coordinate with the USFWS and the

appropriate state agency when planning their Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan, said U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Wildlife Biologist John Bardwell.

"Army environmental professionals should work with their state and U.S. Fish and Wildlife representatives as the INRMP plan is being developed," Bardwell said. "These early reviews of the plan help ensure adequate protection is provided to species that come under the authority of the USFWS, like the bald eagle and other migratory birds."

Legal protection continues after species are removed from the threatened and endangered list. According to USFWS, the Department of Interior monitors species for a minimum of five years after delisting, and can place a species back on the list if necessary. In the case of the bald eagle, it will still be protected by federal laws like the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, whereby it is illegal to kill or harass eagles, or sell or possess eagles or eagle parts without a special permit. The bird is also protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

Natural resources management, particularly at the federal level, is complex and still developing. The Army's INRMP provides incremental steps to achieve long-term goals. Protecting threatened and endangered species like the bald eagle is one of those goals, Sekscienski said. — *Lori Davis, USAEC*

## CD Teaches Ammo Accountability

FOLLOWING Army procedures for handling ammunition is necessary to ensure a soldier's safety and to maintain munitions accountability. It's also an important part

of complying with environmental laws during training missions.

Returning munitions residue — the materials that remain after munitions are expended — to the ammunition supply point is a complicated business. Residue "turn-in" procedures take into consideration logistical, safety, environmental and trade security factors.

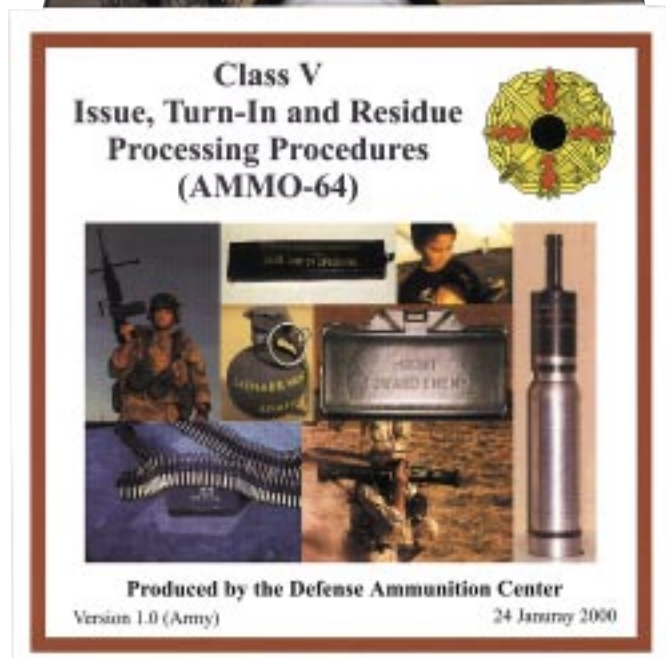
To promote better understanding of the importance of ammunition accountability, the Defense Ammunition Center has developed a free computer-based training course to teach soldiers how to properly draw and account for training ammunition. The CD-ROM targets noncommissioned officers and junior enlisted soldiers who must issue, account for, turn in and process both live ammunition and residue.

Residue includes the shipping containers and components of the munition itself. For example, the residue of one wooden box of 30 fragmentation grenades consists of a wooden box, 30 fiber containers for the grenades and 30 levers and safety pins. Returning this residue clears the range of trash and allows for reuse and recovery of packaging and components. This saves money and enhances accountability.

Reuse of residue can be very cost-effective. In the example of tank ammunition, if all the empty packaging generated in training were reused, the government would reap a cost avoidance of \$7.9 million, according to Army estimates.

Once removed from the range, residue may be considered a solid waste. Units must clear this solid waste through the post environmental office to ensure compliance with all environmental laws and regulations before it may be disposed of or placed in a landfill. This





**The CD-ROM targets soldiers who must issue, account for, turn in and process both live ammunition and residue.**

process also ensures that no hazardous materials reach the landfill, where they could become an environmental or safety hazard.

The CD currently contains separate Using Unit and Ammunition Supply Point learning modules. These modules provide step-by-step instructions for completing the necessary forms used to track ammunition. The center also plans to produce a management module that will detail Army policy and legal requirements for processing and handling ammunition residue at all levels.

Through this educational effort the Army seeks to encourage reuse of materials, prevent pollution on ranges and ensure safety. Commanders can use this course as a basis to appoint residue verification and certification personnel, and as a targeted training tool or refresher.

Knowledge of proper ammunition control benefits individual soldiers as well as the

Army as a whole. Soldiers who fail to account for munitions and residue may be subject to disciplinary action, including action under the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

Likewise, civilians who do not follow accountability procedures can be held accountable by the government, and may face disciplinary actions or be subject to civil or criminal prosecution.

To help soldiers who have mistakenly kept ammunition or residue, the CD also explains the importance of the "amnesty program" under which soldiers can turn in ammunition or residue without fear of disciplinary action.

The training CD may be ordered through the Internet at [www.dac.army.mil/AS/produ.html](http://www.dac.army.mil/AS/produ.html). Once at the site, click on the "Class V Issue, Turn-In and Residue Processing Procedures" button. Complete and send the on-line order form in the course description, or use the following ad-

dress: U.S. Army Defense Ammunition Center; ATTN: SOSAC-ASE; 1 C Tree Road; McAlester, OK 74501-9053. — *Robert G. Colclough, Defense Ammunition Center*

## Fort Belvoir Opens Environmental Ed Center

FOR the past 20 years the Accotink Bay Wildlife Refuge has been an important part of efforts to protect the environment at Fort Belvoir, Va.

On April 20, during the celebration of the 30th anniversary of Earth Day, the post took another step to protect and preserve the environment by opening the new Accotink Bay Wildlife Refuge Environmental Education Center. The center will be the focal point for the refuge outreach program, said Patrick McLaughlin, Environmental and Natural Resources Branch chief for the post's Directorate of Installation Services.

Calling the center "an outdoor classroom" for science teachers, he said it was appro-

priate that students participating in the post's programs at Youth Services were at the opening ceremony, going through fun-filled stations designed to teach them about wildlife, conservation, recycling, natural resources and pollution prevention.

Keynote speaker Assistant Secretary of the Army for Installations and Environment Mahlon Apgar IV said children play a role in protecting, preserving and restoring the earth. He told his audience to participate in recycling, to buy products that can be recycled or reused and to use their talents to raise awareness of environmental issues through music, stories, websites and whatever will reach out to others.

Apgar called the new education center a commitment to the future and encouraged the children and adults at Fort Belvoir to learn about protecting, preserving and sustaining the environment. — *Candice Walters, Fort Belvoir Public Affairs Office*



Lori Davis

**A Fort Belvoir girl touches a fox on display at the post's Environmental Education Center.**

Please send your contributions or questions to Thomas Hankus, Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Army Environmental Center, Attn.: SFIM-AEC-PA, Bldg. 4415, Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD 21010-5401, or e-mail [Thomas.Hankus@aec.apgea.army.mil](mailto:Thomas.Hankus@aec.apgea.army.mil). Hankus can be reached by phone at (410) 436-2556 or (DSN) 584-2556